

UNDERSTANDING DEMOCRACY AND VIOLENCE IN AFRICA:
AN ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

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MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE
Strategic Studies

by

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The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are those of the student author and do not necessarily represent the views of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College or any other governmental agency. (References to this study should include the foregoing statement.)

ABSTRACT

UNDERSTANDING DEMOCRACY AND VIOLENCE IN AFRICA: AN ANALYSIS OF THE DATA, by Major John R. Bennett, 67 pages.

This is a study of polity (governance) and internal political violence in Africa. The purpose is to understand how polity and violence interact with one another using quantitative analytical methods. The goal is to quantitatively define the nature of the relationship and possibly identify timeframes in which we may be able to predict certain levels of violent behavior. The actual findings yield little predictive power. The final analysis reveals support for previous findings about the nature of the relationship between these variables. Mature democracies have a higher probability of experiencing lower rates of violence as well as a more stable rate of violence. Whereas, countries with a weak government system, or going through a transition in government, are more likely to experience both fluctuations in rates of violence and increased rates of violence. In conclusion, this thesis is inconclusive. The findings support the primary research question that mature democracies actually do tend to be less violent.

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ACRONYMS

GTD	Global Terrorism Database
START	Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Defending democracy and human rights is related to every enduring national interest.

— President Obama, *National Security Strategy*

Introduction and Background

Historically, there has been interest in studies of stability in sovereign nations for many reasons. Stability is important for the underlying principles of our understanding of national sovereignty. A precursor to national sovereignty, and the ability to effectively operate on an international system with other sovereign nations, is an underlying assumption that the state is stable enough to maintain its sovereignty. There have been many theories proposed in the study of stability within state governance structures. One such theory, communicated by Snowden and Vane, in an interview with Alberto Alesina in 1999, underlines that economic prosperity promotes democratic governance (Snowdon and Vane 1999, 19-25).^{*} While this sounds like a reasonable conclusion, the main point is that there has been interest in the study of stability in governance for many years.

^{*} Democracy is defined as a system of governance that has officials elected by the majority of the electorate and has institutions that establish the core values most of the population identify with. Stability is the lack of volatility in levels of either polity or violence as measured by the standard deviation. These factors are defined in the definitions portion of chapter 1.

So why not use economic variables to understand violence? Why use governance (polity) as a measure to understand violence?[†] The reason is because there are several possible variables that can be used to understand violence.[‡] The Cox, Falconer, and Stackhouse (2009) study included democracy and found that it had no significant value in relation to political violence. Of all the variables that may be used to understand violence, the author believes polity is an important one because it may be a composite or representative variable of the likelihood of violence. The author will attempt to use polity (system of government) to understand violence (internal political violence) using a slightly different approach than Cox, Falconer and Stackhouse. Additionally, a recent study published one year after Cox, Falconer and Stackhouse (2009) by Goldstone et al., seems to offer contradictory findings indicating that polity can be a meaningful variable to predict violence (Goldstone et al. 2010, 204-205).

It is fundamentally important for American policymakers to get the relationship between democracy and stability correct. An underlying theme in U.S. national strategic policy is that there exists a direct correlation between democracy and stability. A tenet of strategic policy is that mature democratic societies are more stable and thus less likely to become involved in armed conflict with one another (Mansfield and Snyder 1995).

[†] Polity may be defined as the system of governance of a nation or state. According to *Webster's New World College Dictionary*, it is a "political or governmental organization; a society or institution with an organized government; state; body politic."

[‡] Violence is defined as political violence as opposed to criminal violence. More specifically, Global Terrorism Database (GTD) "defines a terrorist attack as the threatened or actual use of illegal force and violence by a non-state actor to attain a political, economic, religious, or social goal through fear, coercion, or intimidation" (National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism 2015, 8).

Therefore, America strives to promote democracy so that we can achieve greater levels of stability and peace throughout the world. The end state being that within a more peaceful and stable world, enfranchised peoples can engage in free commerce and free flow of ideas which ultimately enhances our ability to achieve national strategic objectives (Friedman 2004, 105-110). To summarize, Americans believe that democracy leads to stability, which leads to accomplishment of our national interests.

Consequently, the Army Capabilities Integration Center (ARCIC) in its January 2015 white paper on Army Warfighting Challenges identified 20 warfighting challenges of the future. This study provided some potential answers to Army Warfighting Challenge #1 - Develop Situation Understanding, which addresses “how to develop and sustain a high degree of situational understanding while operating in complex environments against determined, adaptive enemy organizations” (ARCIC 2015, 5). This study does not answer this challenge directly. However, by providing information on the nature of the relationship between polity (governance) and violence (internal political violence) in countries in Africa, we can gain a better understanding (situational awareness) of Africa and these findings may have a direct impact on our assessment of the complex nature of the African contemporary operating environment.

The question remains does democracy lead to stability? Is there a fundamentally quantifiable and measurable way to assess whether democracy actually yields stability? That is the purpose of this paper; the author will attempt to answer this question using two distinct databases with longitudinal data to determine if democratic societies yield more stable societies. This will be a quantitative analysis of countries in Africa for the purpose of testing the hypothesis. Africa was chosen because there are a number of

countries that exhibit a range of outcomes with regard to levels of violence. This continent also provides good examples of countries across the spectrum of governance systems yielding a wide range across the democracy variable. In this way, Africa offers a good specimen to study for the purpose of this analysis.

Finally, the findings are important because not every nation in the world agrees with the U.S. that democracy leads to stability, which leads to achievement of national objectives. There is room for disagreement on this matter; there are some state and non-state actors in the world who blatantly oppose democracy. Therefore, a better understanding of the relationship between democracy and stability is crucial to inform a more robust national strategic policy, which takes into account the nuances of the relationship between the variables. Armed with all of the facts, policymakers can develop better policy, decision makers can make better decisions and statesmen can negotiate arrangements more favorable for our nation without compromising on key values that we determine are non-negotiable.

Issue

The purpose of the study is to identify if democratic governance is a relevant variable in determining the likelihood of stability in African countries. The conceptual issue is that the findings of Cox, Falconer and Stackhouse (2009) indicate that democracy is not a relevant variable with regard to predicting both domestic and international terrorism. Democracy is a key concept imbedded in U.S. national strategy. If democracy has no effect on the likelihood of stability in any given country, then should it rate so highly in our national strategic policy? Worse still, if democracy has no effect on stability, and we continue to insist on spreading democracy, what are the effects of this

approach on our adversaries? The problem is does democracy predict stability in African countries?

Research Question

My primary research question is “does a mature democracy predict stability in violence in African countries?” Secondary questions that follow are: “Does a stable polity reduce the probability of violence?” “Does a volatile polity increase the probability of violence?” “Does a higher absolute polity score (mature form of government) reduce the probability of violence?” “Does a lower polity score (autocratic form of government) increase the probability of violence?” “Do countries with low and stable rates of violence experience a more stable form of government?” “Do countries with high and volatile rates of violence experience a volatile form of government?” “Do countries with volatile forms of government experience rates of violence?”

Assumptions

U.S. strategy assumes that there is a direct correlation between democracy and stability (violence). A fundamental objective of the National Security Strategy is the spread of democracy and stability throughout the world. The U.S. is a large proponent of spreading peace and justice around the world as best promulgated by stability brought about by democracy. According to Friedman, one of the fundamental reasons for spreading democracy throughout the world is to leverage the globalization of finance, technology, and information advances to build and sustain a free-market system that benefits not only that nation, but global investors and trade partners (Friedman 2004, 105-110). On the other hand, Bradley argues that globalization has actually inhibited

democratization in Africa because investors are more interested in generating wealth and less interested in democratization that benefits the people of the country being invested in (Bradley 2005, 548).

The purpose of this thesis is to test the assumption that democratization leads to stability. Additionally, the author assumes that we can study a phenomenon within a nation and make generalizations based on the findings of the study that apply to the nature of the relationship between these two variables. For example, this thesis will use occurrences of political violence as a means to determine the total number of fatalities from violent acts within a given country. The author will then use information about the nature of the polity (governance) of the country, and compare and contrast the nature of polity with the number of fatalities from violent acts over time. These findings will be used to make claims about the nature of the relationship between the two variables of democracy and violence in general. The author is relatively confident making this assumption because sociologists and political scientists do similar quantitative comparisons by studying variables at aggregate national level statistics. Using proven methods of quantitative analysis, the author will perform the analysis guided by methods of previously performed studies.

Another assumption the author makes is that one is able to derive the theory of the nature of the relationship of the variables in this study from existing theory not based on longitudinal studies. In addition, the violence variable is computed differently in different studies. While it is meaningful to acknowledge these assumptions, which may lead to difficulty interpreting the findings, it is important to state that this is the nature of the scientific method. Each scientist chooses to study the topic slightly differently resulting

in findings that in and of themselves may not be directly applicable to other studies in the body of knowledge. However, through a general contribution to that body of knowledge, others can gain a deeper understanding of the topic of the study.

Definition of Terms

Stability applies to both polity and violence. Stability is a lack of volatility in either polity or violence within a country as measured by the standard deviation. This variable is measured over time, for example if Country X has the same measure of polity or violence for several years then this variable is stable. Stability will be specifically measured using the standard deviation for either polity or violence.

Next, the author must define polity and violence. Violence is the frequency of fatalities as a result of incidents recorded in the START database for any country in any given year.[§] The fatalities as a result of incidents recorded in the START database are part of the Global Terrorism Database (GTD) within the START dataset collection. The fatalities per incident are considered a result of political violence and cannot be defined as criminal violence. Only those incidents that meet one of the Criterion 1, 2, or 3 in the START GTD dataset will be included in the study.^{**}

[§] The START database is hosted by the University of Maryland and is available on their website www.start.umd.edu. The Global Terrorism Database (GTD) is maintained by the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START).

^{**} START GTD definition for the criterion variables may be found in the database codebook available at the University of Maryland website www.start.umd.edu.

Polity is the score of the polity2 variable in the Polity IV database.^{††} Polity2, hereafter referred to simply as polity, is a score based on a scale from negative ten (-10) to positive ten (10). Negative ten is a mature autocratic government. Positive ten is a mature democratic government. The closer the score is to zero the less capable the government. The score of zero (0) is assigned to a nation without an effective governing body.

Additionally, the polity score will be used to define the level of democracy in this study, but it is important to understand a conceptual definition of democracy as well. According to Samuel P. Huntington, democracies have two key components. Their political officers are elected in a competitive process which the bulk of the population can vote on, and there exists a “common institutional core” that is critical to defining the identity of the people of the nation. Conversely, the absence of the institutional core is what makes an autocracy (Huntington 2009, 31-32). In addition, Huntington defines a third wave of post-Cold War democratization throughout the world from 1980–2000 that resulted from the collapse of the Soviet Union (Huntington 2009, 33).

Limitations

Data are not available for all countries in Africa. The author will complete the analysis with the data available for a few dozen countries in Africa and for the time available (1994 to 2014). The intent is to test the theory behind the nature of the relationship between the variables of polity and violence. Once the nature of the

^{††} The Polity IV database is hosted by the Center for Systemic Peace and Societal-Systems Research Inc. and can be located at the following website www.systemicpeace.org.

relationship has been identified, an attempt will be made to generalize the findings where possible.

Scope and Delimitations

This study attempts to determine the nature of the relationship between polity and violence in African countries. This study will include violence recorded in the START database. This study will use the Polity IV database to measure polity. Bradley argues that ethnic, class and religious divisions in Africa do offer significant challenges to democratization in Africa (Bradley 2005, 548). This study does not, therefore, presume that polity and violence are the only meaningful variables that may be analyzed to understand and explain violence. Given the limited scope of this analysis, polity and violence are the variables chosen for this analysis. This study will not analyze countries outside of Africa. This study will not analyze all countries in Africa only those for which data are available.

Significance of Study

If the results show a direct correlation between changes in polity and an increase in violence, this could indicate that a stable polity is important if we seek to achieve less violence. Ultimately, it may tell us if stability in polity is more important than where a country is located on the polity scale. However, it is important to know if there are strong indications that location on the polity scale matters. The nature of the relationship of polity and violence may also cause us to question our beliefs that democracy leads to stability that promotes U.S. interests throughout the world.

The results could affect the discussion regarding the assumption that democracy leads to stability, which leads to promotion of U.S. interests abroad. This may require additional research that could further develop our understanding of the nature of these two variables. It would also be interesting to see how the findings relate with other theories on the nature of conflict in international relationships such as *The Clash of Civilizations*, by Samuel P. Huntington (1996). Huntington indicates that culture plays a role in violence between states (Huntington 2009, 31-32). It may be interesting if further analyses were conducted to determine if the findings indicate that there are differences in levels of violence and stability among culturally distinct regions of Africa.

Summary

The purpose of this thesis is to identify if polity is a relevant variable in determining the likelihood of stability in African countries. In this chapter we reviewed the issue, research question, assumptions, definition of terms, limitations, scope and delimitations, and significance of the study. Chapter 2, Literature Review will examine polity (governance) and internal political violence in Africa to determine the nature of their relationship. The theories to be reviewed in the literature review are three aspects of democratic peace theory: internal sources of violence, external sources of violence, regime instability, and finally possible solutions.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The purpose of this thesis is to identify if polity is a relevant variable in determining the likelihood of stability in African countries. To answer this question, the author examines polity (governance) and violence (internal political) in Africa to determine the nature of their relationship. The theories to be reviewed in the literature review are three aspects of democratic peace theory: internal sources of violence, external sources of violence, and regime instability, and finally possible solutions.

Democratic Peace Theory

According to Cox, Falconer and Stackhouse, the University of Michigan's Correlates of War Project, "indicated that no two [mature] democracies have gone to war with one another since 1812" (Cox, Falconer, and Stackhouse 2009, 30; Mansfield and Snyder 1995). Likewise, "[m]any scholars have theorized and the empirical proof demonstrates that [mature] democracies do not war with one another" (Cox, Falconer, and Stackhouse 2009, 31). Friedman would argue that the Golden Arches Theory of Conflict Prevention would further corroborate the Democratic Peace Theory (Friedman 2004, 248-275). Likewise according to Bayer, there is statistical evidence that does corroborate the conclusion that mature democracies attain peace over other forms of governance; however, there exists a caveat that "democracy does not always improve relations and might even impede the progress of [international] relationships" (Bayer 2010, 544). Similarly, Mansfield and Snyder argue that the transition from autocratic to

democratic forms of government is turbulent (Mansfield and Snyder 1995). With the exclusion of the caveat, this seems to be a driving force behind the desire to democratize the world. The idea if all the nations of the world are democracies, then we can eliminate or greatly reduce war; this idea treats democracy as an inoculation to war. An exposed weakness this theory is that immature or weak democracies or countries transitioning to a democratic government have no such guarantees of peace.

Another interesting finding of Cox, Falconer and Stackhouse, is that any nation under any polity that undergoes change or a transition in government is susceptible to terrorist attack (Cox, Falconer, and Stackhouse 2009, 32). This seems to indicate that the nature of the relation between polity and violence is that as polity changes (either an increase or decrease) there will be an increase in violence. Therefore, changes in polity, that is instability in polity, leads to an increase in violence. This leads to a secondary question; does a stabile polity lead to a reduction in violence? The author will attempt to answer this question in this study. Having reviewed democratic peace theory, the author now discusses external and internal sources of violence, and regime change.

External Sources of Violence

With regard to external sources of threats to a state, Cox, Falconer, and Stackhouse provide sources that support the concept that because democracies value freedom and liberty, they tend to be less capable of dealing with external threats of violence from terrorism (Cox, Falconer, and Stackhouse 2009, 31). As an example, Sharansky argues that the 11 September 2001 attacks on America were the result of terrorists who were spawned in the tyrannical regime of Saudi Arabia. Sharansky would argue this is a compelling reason to promote democracy throughout the world in order to

reduce or eliminate the threat of terrorism (Sharansky 2004, 13-15). This indicates that we should expect to see a larger degree of external violence in countries that have a higher score of polity (positive ten) compared to those that have a lower score of polity (negative ten). It is important to consider that we cannot determine this finding based on raw levels of violence across countries, but only through some relative comparison of violence across countries.

Internal Sources of Violence

On the matter of violence from internal sources, mature democracies provide non-violent means and mechanisms by which people can resolve their differences or quarrels. In other words, democracies lessen the effect of inequalities that contribute to terrorism (Cox, Falconer, and Stackhouse 2009, 31). This study will use fatalities as a result of acts of terrorism to measure violence regardless of the source of terrorism (international or domestic). What Cox, Falconer, and Stackhouse offer is an indication about the nature of the relationship between polity and violence. With regard to the variables in this study; if democratic forms of government lessen the effects of inequality that may contribute to terrorism is true, then we should expect to see less domestic or internal violence in states with a high polity score (positive ten) and more domestic or internal violence in states that have a low polity score (negative ten). Cox, Falconer, and Stackhouse made a distinction between sources of violence being either domestic or international. This study does not attempt to make such a distinction. We cannot determine this finding based on raw levels of violence across countries, but only through some relative comparison of violence across countries.

Poor countries are less able to deal with violence effectively. According to Cox, Falconer, and Stackhouse, “Both macroeconomic deprivation and deprivation between classes seem to correlate well with domestic violence” (Cox, Falconer, and Stackhouse 2009, 33). This speaks to the nature of the relationship between polity and violence. We expect to see that countries with polity scores that approach zero are less effective forms of government and are less capable of dealing with violence. Additionally, Cox, Falconer, and Stackhouse find that “[i]n economically weak states, diasporic influencers either are able to demand concessions from the government or are comfortable attempting to force concessions through violence” (Cox, Falconer, and Stackhouse 2009, 34). This also lends credence to the model as we see another example of how weak governing bodies are further vulnerable to violence because of their inability to effectively deal with violence. The distinction must be made that these conditions are likely to affect weak governance systems. Mature forms of government are less susceptible to this form of domestic or internal violence.

Regime Instability

Cox, Falconer, and Stackhouse, “define political instability as the propensity for a regime or government to collapse” (Cox, Falconer, and Stackhouse 2009, 34). It modifies the model slightly if we use this definition of political instability. This may indicate that any significant change in polity can potentially lead to the collapse of the government, essentially resetting the polity score to zero. This may also be interpreted that a nation that undergoes a significant change in polity is likely to go through a period where the mean polity score is likely to be at or near zero. According to Cox, Falconer, and Stackhouse, “Studies find evidence that any political change is linked to greatly increased

chance of civil war” (Cox, Falconer, and Stackhouse 2009, 35). This is supportive of the model. Any change in the polity score will increase the likelihood of violence. This is different from the note about the collapse of the government. A change in polity is different from a collapse of government.

According to Cox, Falconer, and Stackhouse, “weakness in central government, not ethnic variables, is the greatest determinant of insurgency and civil war. . . . Governments [are] weakest during regime changes, especially changes from autocracy to democracy” (Cox, Falconer, and Stackhouse 2009, 35). Goldstone, et al. argue a similar point that competent regimes are capable of defeating sources of violence such as an insurgency. Less competent regimes are less capable of defeating sources of violence and are likely to experience regime change (Goldstone et al. 2010, 191). Furthermore, Wright finds that new democracies with lower levels of political competition are weaker, less stable democracies (Wright 2008, 221). Additionally, Mansfield and Snyder ascertain that democratization leads to “weak central authority, unstable domestic coalitions, and high-energy mass politics” (Mansfield and Snyder 1995). This supports the model; governments that rank near zero on the polity score are weak governments. These governments are most likely to experience significant levels of violence such as insurgency, civil war, or other forms of violence.

In addition, the findings from the research indicate that the transition from a negative polity score to a positive polity score will lead to more violence, at least in the short-term. This indicates that those who seek to democratize countries should be careful, as the short-term transition period is likely to be violent and difficult for all parties. Additionally, this is dangerous because neighboring, or other powerful, countries may

decide to become involved in peacekeeping operations when they see a country that is experiencing an increase in violence. However, Richard Betts indicates that governments who decide to become involved in peacekeeping missions should do so carefully and sparingly as nations often make critical mistakes that usually lead to increase or lengthen the level of violence and suffering (Betts 2001, 597). To further support this point, Goldstone, et al., find that infighting and positioning within intermediate regimes often prolong and further increase the risk of destabilization (Goldstone et al. 2010, 205).

Possible Solutions

If hostility is inevitable and conflict may exist in the world, what are some plausible solutions to address the potentiality of violence when the political environment is conducive to violence? A possible solution is the use of Special Operations Forces who are capable of operating in peace making roles more so than their conventional counterparts (Meredith 2015, 30-35). Our primary task should be to establish individual and collective security and stability through “holistic, long-term strategic-political level, and civil-military” efforts (Manwaring 2012, 34). Along these same lines Bouchat recommends ways in which the United States can work closely with Nigeria in counterterrorism efforts. His recommendations are specific to Nigeria, but may also provide some insight approaches that may be taken in other countries in the region (Bouchat 2013, 61-63). Concerning the military institutions within troubled African nations, Harkness argues that a “politically insulated, merit-based military” is necessary to prevent degradation of the political environment and help improve political conditions (Harkness 2015, 13-24). Additionally, Larsdotter argues that more multilateral armed

forces presence is necessary in unstable regions of Africa to help stabilize the region (Larsdotter 2015, 25-34).

Summary

The purpose of this thesis is to identify if polity is a relevant variable in determining the likelihood of stability in African countries. To answer this question, the author examines polity (governance) and internal political violence in Africa to determine the nature of their relationship. The author reviewed three aspects of democratic peace theory: internal sources of violence, external sources of violence, and regime instability. Concluding with a review of possible solutions to political instability the violence that follows. Now, the author reviews why this study is needed.

This study is necessary because there are few recent studies in the body of knowledge that has attempted to clearly define and understand the nature of the relationship between polity (governance) and internal political violence using quantitative analysis. A recent Goldstone et al. study differs from this study in that it took a more detailed look at the various component variables of polity available within the Polity IV database. Goldstone et al. used a different measure of violence. As research is the replication of studies by other researchers, this study attempts to replicate some of the findings of that study while remaining independent by using the composite measure of polity and a different database as a measure of violence. The Goldstone et al. study was able to develop a model that could predict violence in 80 percent of cases two years prior to the violence (Goldstone et al. 2010). While, this author will not presume to be able to identify a model that robust and capable, it is a goal of this study to provide a predictive model that may be helpful in identifying countries or regions that may be likely to

experience an outbreak of violence before the violent outbreak happens. This is not to somehow make a recipe to usurp potentially violent persons or groups and remove them from the equation before they can act. The goal is to provide some mechanism by which policymakers and interested parties may be able to better prepare to deal with the violence when it does happen. At the very optimistic level, it may be useful to those who seek to leverage other elements of power, such as diplomatic or economic solution, to help keep countries from going down the path of violence. The next chapter begins with a presentation of the operational approach, brief description of criteria, research methodology, discussion of threats to validity and biases, and finally concludes with a detailed score and delimitations.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of the study is to identify if polity is a relevant variable in determining the likelihood of stability in African countries. This chapter begins with a presentation of the operational approach, brief description of criteria, research methodology, discussion of threats to validity and biases, and finally concludes with a detailed score and delimitations.

Operational Approach

The author will use the START database and the Polity IV database to gather data necessary to answer the questions. The primary question is: “Does democracy predict stability in African countries?” Secondary questions are listed here: “Does a stable polity reduce the probability of violence?” “Does a volatile polity increase the probability of violence?” “Does a higher absolute polity score (mature form of government) reduce the probability of violence?” “Does a lower polity score (autocratic form of government) increase the probability of violence?” “Do countries with low and stable rates of violence experience a more stable form of government?” “Do countries with high and volatile rates of violence experience a volatile form of government?” “Do countries with volatile forms of government experience rates of violence?”

Criteria

The method used in this study is similar to what other researchers have used to study like problems. The selection of variables is based on those found in literature and

those that interest the author given the importance of these variables in national strategic policy formulation. The selection of quantitative comparison is a natural result of having access to longitudinal data in two databases that measure these variables. The method of comparison was formulated as a result of reviewing several studies and determining a hybrid method that will work with the variables and data of this study. The databases used in this study have been used by other researches in the field of study to answer similar questions. They offer valid, reliable and credible sources of data for the purpose of this study which will use available data for the years and countries in both databases.

The evaluation criteria are provided in Table 1 Evaluation Criteria through Table 5 Evaluation Criteria. The criteria consist of an assessment of both polity and violence, which have been subdivided into categories based on mean and standard deviation for each variable. The violence mean has been used to determine if violence is high or low. The polity mean has been used to determine if polity is a mature autocracy, weak autocracy, weak democracy, or mature democracy. The standard deviation has been used to determine if the variable is either stable or volatile about its mean.

The reader may expect to encounter six different types of tables in this study; note the all have the following characteristics in common. The tables are all '2 by 2 tables' with the variable along the left hand column as some measure of polity. The variable along the top of the columns is some measure of violence.

All tables provide a basic title and the values in the body of the table are the sum number of countries that meet the specified attribute as defined by the table axis headings. Each table will be introduced by a paragraph that offers a description of the table and a basic quantitative analysis of the number of countries in the table. The

paragraph then describes how those numbers provide evidence to confirm, deny or neither confirm or deny the answers to the secondary questions.

Table 1 Evaluation Criteria, Stable and Volatile Polity and Low and High Violence, compares stable standard deviation of polity and volatile standard deviation of polity with low mean violence and high mean violence. A stable polity is a polity that has a standard deviation that is within the threshold described in Annex A. A volatile polity is a polity that has a standard deviation outside of the threshold described in Annex A. Low violence is defined by a mean violence that is below a numerical threshold described in Annex A. High violence is defined by a mean violence that is above a numerical threshold described in Annex A. The sum number of countries for each category will be given. See table 1 as an example of what we shall expect to see in chapter 4.

Table 1. Evaluation Criteria: Stable and Volatile Polity and Low and High Violence			
		Violence	
		Low	High
Polity	Stable		
	Volatile		

Source: Developed by author based upon data in the START and Polity databases.

Table 2 Evaluation Criteria, Weak and Mature Polity and Low and High Violence, compares mature polity and weak polity with low mean violence and high mean violence. A mature polity is a mean polity whose absolute value is above the threshold described in Annex A. A weak polity is a mean polity whose absolute value is

below the threshold described in Annex A. Low violence is defined by a mean violence that is below a numerical threshold described in Annex A. High violence is defined by a mean violence that is above a numerical threshold described in Annex A. The sum number of countries for each category will be given. See table 2 as an example of what we shall expect to see in chapter 4.

Table 2. Evaluation Criteria: Weak and Mature Polity and Low and High Violence			
		Violence	
		Low	High
Polity	Weak		
	Mature		

Source: Developed by author based upon data in the START and Polity databases.

Table 3 Evaluation Criteria, Evaluation Criteria: Autocratic and Democratic Polity and Low and High Violence, compares democratic polity and autocratic polity with low mean violence and high mean violence. A democratic polity is a mean polity whose value is above zero. An autocratic polity is a mean polity whose value is below zero. Low violence is defined by a mean violence that is below a numerical threshold described in Annex A. High violence is defined by a mean violence that is above a numerical threshold described in Annex A. The sum number of countries for each category will be given. See table 3 as an example of what we shall expect to see in chapter 4.

Table 3. Evaluation Criteria: Autocratic and Democratic Polity and Low and High Violence			
		Violence	
		Low	High
Polity	Autocratic		
	Democratic		

Source: Developed by author based upon data in the START and Polity databases.

Table 4 Evaluation Criteria, Stable and Volatile Polity and Low Stable and High Volatile Violence. compares stable standard deviation of polity and volatile standard deviation of polity with low mean and stable standard deviation of violence and high mean and volatile standard deviation of violence. A stable polity is a polity that has a standard deviation that is within the threshold described in Annex A. A volatile polity is a polity that has a standard deviation outside of the threshold described in Annex A. A low stable violence is defined by a mean violence that is below a numerical threshold and whose standard deviation falls within the threshold described in Annex A. A high volatile violence is defined by a mean violence that is above a numerical threshold and whose standard deviation falls outside of the threshold described in Annex A. The sum number of countries for each category will be given. See table 4 as an example of what we shall expect to see in chapter 4.

Table 4. Evaluation Criteria: Stable and Volatile Polity and Low Stable and High Volatile Violence			
		Violence	
		Low Stable	High Volatile
Polity	Stable		
	Volatile		

Source: Developed by author based upon data in the START and Polity databases.

Table 5 Evaluation Criteria, Mature Democratic and Autocratic Polity and Stable and Volatile Violence, compares stable standard deviation of polity and volatile standard deviation of polity with stable standard deviation of violence and volatile standard deviation of violence. A stable polity is a standard deviation of polity whose value is below numerical threshold described in Annex A. A volatile polity is a standard deviation of polity whose value is above numerical threshold described in Annex A. A stable violence is defined by a standard deviation of violence that is below a numerical threshold described in Annex A. A volatile violence is defined by a standard deviation of violence that is above a numerical threshold described in Annex A. The sum number of countries for each category will be given. See table 5 as an example of what we shall expect to see in chapter 4.

Table 5. Evaluation Criteria: Mature Democratic and Autocratic Polity and Stable and Volatile Violence			
		Violence	
		Stable	Volatile
Polity	Mature Democratic		
	Mature Autocratic		

Source: Developed by author based upon data in the START and Polity databases.

Table 6 Evaluation Criteria, Mature Democratic and Autocratic Polity and Stable and Volatile Violence, compares mature democratic polity and mature autocratic polity with stable standard deviation of violence and volatile standard deviation of violence. A mature democratic polity is a mean polity whose value is above numerical threshold described in Annex A. A mature autocratic polity is a mean polity whose value is below numerical threshold described in Annex A. A stable violence is defined by a standard deviation of violence that is below a numerical threshold described in Annex A. A volatile violence is defined by a standard deviation of violence that is above a numerical threshold described in Annex A. The sum number of countries for each category will be given. See table 6 as an example of what we shall expect to see in chapter 4.

Table 6. Evaluation Criteria: Mature Democratic and Autocratic Polity and Stable and Volatile Violence			
		Violence	
		Stable	Volatile
Polity	Mature Democratic		
	Mature Autocratic		

Source: Developed by author based upon data in the START and Polity databases.

Table 7 Evaluation Criteria, Mature Democratic and Autocratic Polity and Low and High Violence, compares mature democratic polity and mature autocratic polity with low violence and high violence. A mature democratic polity is a mean polity whose value is above numerical threshold described in Annex A. A mature autocratic polity is a mean polity whose value is below numerical threshold described in Annex A. A low violence is defined by a mean violence that is below a numerical threshold described in Annex A. A high violence is defined by a mean violence that is above a numerical threshold described in Annex A. The sum number of countries for each category will be given. See table 7 as an example of what we shall expect to see in chapter 4.

Table 7. Evaluation Criteria: Mature Democratic and Autocratic Polity and Low and High Violence			
		Violence	
		Low	High
Polity	Mature Democratic		
	Mature Autocratic		

Source: Developed by author based upon data in the START and Polity databases.

Research Methodology

The research method follows; the author exported data from the START and Polity IV data repositories into a data tabulation program. The author sorted the data from each database by country and year. The author compiled the data into one tabulation source file and will then analyzed the data in the following manner.

There were a few types of analytic methods used for each country by year. The study looked at the change in the mean values of each variable over time by country controlling for population size. The study also looked at the change in the standard deviation of each variable over time by country. In this way, the study was able to answer the primary and secondary questions and test the various components of the theoretical model postulated in the Chapter 4 Analysis.

Validity and Bias Challenges

The threats to the validity of the study are outlined in this section as follows: data is not available for all countries in the continent of Africa for the dates of the study. The population sizes of the countries vary greatly. The START database is a Global Terror Database and does not reflect all types of violence. The author addresses each of these in turn.

Data are not available for all countries in Africa for the dates of the study. The databases do not have data for each country in Africa. This study therefore takes a sample of the countries based on the data that are available. It is in some way a convenient sample in that the author will analyze data from each of the countries that are available. However, the author will not conduct detailed statistical analysis, but analysis of trends in the data available based on simple descriptive statistics, that is mean and standard

deviation. In conducting statistical analysis greater care would be needed with regard to the sample in order to make sure the sample is representative of the population. Since this study will only conduct statistical analysis using descriptive statistics, this threat to validity is diminished. That being said, the author must remain cautious about making broad generalizations of the findings. It is the intent of the study to make generalizations from the findings where possible. Care will be applied to the specific wording and interpretation of the findings.

The population sizes of the countries vary greatly over time. A direct comparison of the number of fatalities in each country would be a threat to the validity of the study if the study were comparing the number of fatalities across countries. Additionally, with regard to the measure of fatalities, it is difficult to determine how the variable may have been impacted by the advances in medicine over time. It is possible that some countries in the sample have more advanced medical treatment capabilities than others. Likewise, countries with advanced medicine are able to keep victims of terrorist attacks alive. This complicates the issue of attempting to compare rates of fatalities across countries. This study will conduct statistical analysis on these data. This study will compare each country's data to its own data over time to compute descriptive statistics i.e., mean and standard deviation.

The study controls for variations in country size by converting the number of fatalities to a ratio of the number of fatalities per one hundred thousand persons in the population of that country for that year. Likewise, some of the other studies have excluded smaller countries because they were conducting statistical tests of the data across countries. The author would like to include smaller countries in the analysis

because the variables apply to small and large countries alike. It will be helpful to understand the dynamics at play across all countries regardless of size. It would be interesting to determine if the nature of the relationship of the study variables does vary by country size. While there is no evidence in the literature to suggest this, it may be because many of the studies have not included country size in the analysis. There is also not any real discussion of the significance of country size in the literature. The author does not know if this is because it is not important or because it has not been considered. Regardless, country size will not be specifically analyzed in this study, but countries of various sizes will be included in the dataset.

The Polity IV dataset contains data from over 160 countries that exceed a population of five hundred thousand (Center for Systemic Peace 2014, 4). The Polity IV project team took extensive measures to ensure the quality and reliability of the data measures coded in the Polity IV dataset. Concepts were refined, codified, standardized and documented and disseminated throughout the project team and quality assurance measures were implemented to ensure standards were applied evenly across the dataset (Center for Systemic Peace 2014, 6).

The START database is a Global Terrorism Database (GTD) and does not reflect all types of violence. The database used as the violence variable in the study was a terrorist database. For an incident to be included in the GTD dataset, it must include these three attributes: intentional, violence (or threat of violence), and sub-national actors. Additionally, the incident must exhibit two of the three criteria listed here: political, economic, religious, or social goal; intent to coerce, intimidate or convey message to larger audience; and violate international humanitarian law (National Consortium for the

Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism 2015, 8-9). Specifically, this study has selected intentional killings by sub-national actors that included all three of the criteria.

A caveat is that this study cannot test if countries with high polity scores have the same total level of violence as countries with low polity score. The study was only able to analyze and compare terror violence. The study does use the terror database as an approximate measure of violence from which to test the theoretical model. Future studies may include other violence data to include all forms of violence. In this way, the future study would be able to test the hypothesis about the nature of the relationship between total violence as defined by internal and external violence in countries by polity level. However, the literature uses various forms of violence, almost interchangeably, to describe the nature of the relationship between polity and violence. It is also extremely difficult to find a purely internal and external set of data. The GTD data in the START database is data of terrorist incidents and includes methods and forms of violence, which could be considered internal violence. In the final analysis, this study is interested in polity and political violence. The author used the data available to conduct the analysis and produced findings. Care was used in the application of the interpretation of the findings.

The author is biased with regard to democratic beliefs and ideals. The author was born and raised in the United States of America and has a strong pro-democracy and pro-western philosophy; these biases do present a credible issue. To combat these biases, the author has been as transparent as possible in presenting data sources, data tabulations, data comparisons and findings. Where the bias is most likely to be present is in the interpretation of the findings. The author will attempt to compare the data to the model to

be presented in chapter 4. There may be room for arguments that the author used Western sources to produce the model used in this analysis. At the very least, this is fully transparent and the source documents are readily available for analysis and critique.

Detailed Limitations

Some other considerations are the comparison of the two variables, polity and violence. Because polity is on a scale from negative ten to positive ten, it is possible to compare this variable across different countries with the dataset. However, violence is simply the frequency of violence within a country for a given year. It may not be possible to compare this variable directly across the countries in the dataset as it does not account for the size of the population and other variables that may make it difficult to compare across countries. Therefore, an attempt will be made to do internal comparison of the two variables for any country across time. For example, comparing changes in polity and changes in violence in Country X over time to determine the nature of the relationship between polity and violence. In this manner, the author will compare the nature of the relationship between polity and violence over time for all of the countries independently before attempting to make generalizations about the nature of the relationship. Another way of dealing with the variables is to convert the violence variable to compare it across countries over time.

Another consideration is that the method used is a longitudinal study. While in some fields of study, such as psychology, a longitudinal study is traditionally used with persons who provide a more consistent baseline from which to draw a comparison; other social science fields have done longitudinal studies on these types of variables (Goldstone et al. 2010, 190-208). While it is impossible to control for all the variables and factors

that are changing over time within any of the countries included in the study, it is the best means possible to compare these variables to determine the nature of their relationship.

Likewise, it is not meaningful to simply take a snapshot or an average of the two variables and attempt to compare them across countries. Even if one did convert violence to some form that could be readily compared, it would not be as meaningful as actually comparing the variable over time in the same country. Finally, it is important to see the changes in the two variables over time. This will help determine if the nature of the relationship is consistent with what theory predicts.

Investigator bias exists due to previous experience with the model and because this investigator is biased in favor of democracy. The author wants to believe that democracy leads to stability. If democracy does not lead to stability, the author wishes to know why it does not, which may be outside the scope of this analysis.

Detailed Scope and Delimitations

This study includes all forms of violence in the START database. The author wants to include all acts of domestic political violence regardless of who the actor was. This will include acts of violence from people within the country and acts of violence from terrorists and others who are not from the country but enter the country for the specific purpose of conducting violent acts. This study will use the Polity IV database to measure polity.

Other potentially meaning variables may have been religious and ethnic variances, economic factors and many related variables that have been included in other studies. This author chose polity and violence because Cox, Falconer and Stackhouse (2009) found that polity did not have a significant correlation with violence in their study.

This author wants to test that finding to determine if it applies in under slightly different conditions.

Only the countries and years of interest for this study will be included in the analysis. This study will not attempt to draw major geopolitical and strategic level policy recommendations. To do so is outside the scope of this study and outside of the level of expertise of the author. Furthermore, this is not a study of international relations; although, these findings may be applicable to the application of international relations.

Summary

The purpose of the study is to identify if polity is a relevant variable in determining the likelihood of stability in African countries. This chapter began with a presentation of the operational approach, brief description of criteria, research methodology, discussion of threats to validity and biases, and finally concluded with a detailed score and delimitations. Chapter 4 Analysis will examine the results of the literature review, operational approach, application of evaluation criteria, answer research questions, and offer a discussion of conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS

Introduction

The purpose of this research is to identify if polity is a relevant variable in determining the likelihood of stability in African countries. This chapter begins with the results of the literature review, a proposed operational approach, the application of evaluation criteria, answer primary and secondary research questions, and finally a discussion of conclusions and recommendations.

Results of the Literature Review

Given the results of the literature review, what can we expect to find in our analysis? What is the nature of the relationship between polity and violence? We have several findings drawn from the readings. The author will analyze them here and place them together into a model to test against the data.

Next, let us compile all of the findings together. First, as polity changes (either an increase or decrease) there will be an increase in violence. Second, we should expect to see a larger degree of violence from external sources (international terrorism) in countries that have a higher score of polity (positive ten), that is democratic forms of government, compared to those that have a negative score of polity (negative ten). Third, we should expect to see less internal violence (domestic terrorism) in states with a high polity score (positive ten) compared to those states that have a negative polity score (negative ten). Note, this study cannot test either finding two or three because the data used does not differentiate whether the violence is from an internal or external source. Fourth, we

expect to see that countries with polity scores that approach zero are less effective forms of government (weak governments) and are less capable of dealing with violence. In other words, countries with a polity score of zero would have a high level of violence relative to countries with a higher absolute polity score. Fifth, any polity change can lead to the potential collapse of the government, essentially resetting the polity score to zero. Any change in the polity score will increase the likelihood of violence. Governments that rank near zero on the polity score are weak governments. These governments are most likely to experience significant levels of violence such as insurgency or civil war. Sixth, the transition from a negative polity score to a positive polity score will lead to more violence, at least in the short-term.

In the case of the external and internal sources of violence, it is important to point out that the internal sources of violence are higher for those countries with lower polity. Conversely, external sources of violence are lower for those countries with lower polity. The inverse would be said for those countries with a higher polity. In this way, the nature of the relationship between external and internal threat are inverted as we move across the polity scale. This does not tell us anything of the magnitude we should expect to find in the data. It does seem to provide some indications that there is a possibility that total levels of violence (internal and external sources of violence) among countries higher on the polity scale (positive ten) and those lower on the polity scale (negative ten) may be similar.

Haggard and Kaufman argue that high levels of socioeconomic inequality define a “weak democracy syndrome” which may increase the risk of reversion from a democratic regime (Haggard and Kaufman 2012, 512). This situation is likely found in a fledgling

democracy that is still essentially in a transition period. This is important because it further illustrates that weak governments are less capable of dealing with violence. This provides an additional level of detail describing that weak governments are also likely to revert to non-democratic forms of government. Haggard and Kaufman also identify that international donors can support the spread of democracy as was exhibited during the third wave of post-Cold War democratization. However, poor countries, especially those that did not have the fundamental institutions in place, Huntington's institutional core, were likely to revert to a non-democratic form of government (Haggard and Kaufman 2012, 514). This is a caution to policymakers and diplomats who entangle themselves in transitioning governmental regimes.

Operational Approach

The operational approach used to answer the questions is as follows: Given the results of the calculations of mean and standard deviation for both variables, how do we use these data to answer the secondary and primary questions of this study? The author formulated the questions in such a way that they may be answered directly by comparing the information on the table with what we would expect to see based on the model developed through the literature. Applying the literature model, we expected to see that certain levels of volatility are associated with certain mean values of both variables. Therefore, given these expectations, compared with what we actually saw in the data, we can make a determination as to each question's answer.

Application of Evaluation Criteria

General Descriptive Statistics

The other results that were not specifically identified as answers to secondary questions are that 68 percent (26 of 38) of the countries in this study have been trending toward more democratic forms of government. 21 percent (8 of 38) of the countries in the study have a negative trending polity. 68 percent (26 of 38) of the countries in the study exhibited low rates of violence. 68 percent (26 of 38) of countries were trending positive polity score. Furthermore of the 68 percent with a positive trending polity score, 38 percent (10 of 26) are weak autocracies, 27 percent (7 of 26) are weak democracies, and 35 percent (9 of 26) are strong democracies as of 2014 polity data. This may seem to be good on the surface as more countries are trending positive on the polity scale, they are generally moving toward democratic forms of government. However, there are caveats within these findings.

Four of the ten (4 of 10) weak autocratic governments were moving troublingly close to zero polity in 2014 which represents a significant destabilizing effect, generally. These four countries are South Sudan, Libya, Tanzania, and Uganda. Each of these exhibits a high rate of violence, except for Tanzania. Additionally, 22 percent (8 of 38) of countries exhibit negative trends in polity. Of these, 50 percent (4 of 8) are autocratic governments, and 50 percent (4 of 8) are democratic forms of government. Three of the four (3 of 4) autocratic governments are weak autocracies. 50 percent (2 of 4) of the democratic governments with a negative polity trend are weak democracies.

Of the democracies with a negative trending slope, the Central Africa Republic is at zero polity as of 2014 and has an excessively high rate of violence. Furthermore, 74

percent (29 of 38) of the countries in the study are weak forms of government. Among weak forms of government where the majority of the volatility in both polity and violence were exhibited, 62 percent (18 of 29) of weak forms of government exhibited low rates of violence. With regard to the trend in polity change over time, 74 percent (22 of 29) of weak governments indicate a positive trending polity score.

Answer Secondary Research Questions

Secondary Research Question #1

Now, the author will attempt to answer the secondary questions presented earlier in the study: “Does a stable polity reduce the probability of violence?” The data indicated that no, we cannot definitively state that countries with a stable polity score will exhibit lower rates of violence. 67 percent (12 of 18) of countries with a stable polity exhibit low rates of violence. Low rates of violence are equally likely for countries with both volatile and stable polity. Does a stable polity lead to low rates of violence? The answer is inconclusive, see table 8.

Table 8. Application of Evaluation Criteria: Stable and Volatile Polity and Low and High Violence			
N = 38		Violence	
		Low	High
Polity	Stable	12	6
	Volatile	13	7

Source: Developed by author based upon data in the START and Polity databases.

Secondary Research Question #2

Another secondary question presented earlier in the study: “Does a volatile polity increase the probability of violence?” No, there is no evidence to definitively state that a volatile polity will in fact lead to high rates of violence. 35 percent (7 of 20) of countries with a volatile polity score exhibited high rates of violence. High rates of violence are equally likely for countries with both volatile and stable polity. Does a volatile polity increase the probability of violence? The answer is inconclusive, see table 9.

Table 9. Application of Evaluation Criteria: Stable and Volatile Polity and Low and High Violence			
N = 38		Violence	
		Low	High
Polity	Stable	12	6
	Volatile	13	7

Source: Developed by author based upon data in the START and Polity databases.

Secondary Research Question #3

An additional secondary question was: “Does a higher absolute polity score (mature form of government) reduce the probability of violence?” Possibly, we can argue that there is support that suggests that mature forms of government do exhibit lower rates of violence. Therefore, we should expect to see mature democracies and mature autocracies with lower rates of violence than weak governments. According to these results, 75 percent (6 of 8) of mature countries exhibit low rates of violence. On the other

hand, 40 percent (12 of 30) of weak governments exhibit high rates of violence. One could argue that the model does, to some degree, support the argument that mature forms of government are likely to display lower rates of violence. Although, it is not clear that weak forms of government lead to higher rates of violence. Does a higher absolute polity score (mature form of government) reduce the probability of violence? The answer is possibly, see table 10.

Table 10. Application of Evaluation Criteria: Weak and Mature Polity and Low and High Violence			
N = 38		Violence	
		Low	High
Polity	Weak	18	12
	Mature	6	2

Source: Developed by author based upon data in the START and Polity databases.

Secondary Research Question #4

Next, the fourth secondary question is: “Does a lower polity score (autocratic form of government) increase the probability of violence?” No, not all autocratic countries exhibit high rates of violence. 40 percent (8 of 20) of autocratic countries exhibit high rates of violence. Additionally, we find that 28 percent (5 of 18) of the democratic countries exhibit high levels of violence. Democratic countries are not more likely to exhibit terrorism than autocratic countries. Does a lower polity score (autocratic

form of government) increase the probability of violence? The answer is inconclusive, see table 11.

Table 11. Application of Evaluation Criteria: Autocratic and Democratic Polity and Low and High Violence			
N = 38		Violence	
		Low	High
Polity	Autocratic	12	8
	Democratic	13	5

Source: Developed by author based upon data in the START and Polity databases.

Secondary Research Question #5

The fifth secondary question is: Do countries with low and stable rates of violence experience a more stable form of government?” Our expected results are based on the literature and lead us to believe that countries with a low and stable rate of violence should also exhibit a stable form of governance (polity). 50 percent (11 of 22) of countries with low stable rates of violence exhibit a stable form of government.

Therefore, we cannot say that countries exhibiting low and stable rates of violence tend to have a stable government. Those countries that have experienced volatility in mean polity are equally as likely to experience low and stable rates of violence. “Do countries with low and stable rates of violence experience a more stable form of government?” The answer is no we cannot conclude this, see table 12.

Table 12. Application of Evaluation Criteria: Stable and Volatile Polity and Low Stable and High Volatile Violence			
N = 33		Violence	
		Low Stable	High Volatile
Polity	Stable	11	4
	Volatile	11	7

Source: Developed by author based upon data in the START and Polity databases.

Secondary Research Question #6

The sixth secondary question is: “Do countries with high and volatile rates of violence experience a volatile form of government?” We expect to see that countries with a high and volatile rate of violence are expected to exhibit volatile systems of governance (polity). We find that 64 percent (7 of 11) of countries with high and volatile rates of violence exhibit volatile forms of governance. Therefore, it is possible that countries experiencing high and volatile rates of violence are likely to also experience volatility with regard to their mean polity. “Do countries with high and volatile rates of violence experience a volatile form of government?” The answer is possibly they do, see table 13.

Table 13. Application of Evaluation Criteria: Stable and Volatile Polity and Low Stable and High Volatile Violence			
N = 33		Violence	
		Low Stable	High Volatile
Polity	Stable	11	4
	Volatile	11	7

Source: Developed by author based upon data in the START and Polity databases.

Secondary Research Question #7

Lastly, the seventh secondary question is: “Do countries with volatile forms of government experience rates of violence?” We expect to see that countries with volatile systems of governance (polity) experience volatile rates of violence. We find that 45 percent (9 of 20) of countries with volatile forms of governance experience volatile rates of violence. Therefore, it is not likely that countries experiencing volatility with regard to their mean polity also experience volatile rates of violence. “Do countries with volatile forms of government experience rates of violence?” The answer is not likely, see table 14.

Table 14. Application of Evaluation Criteria: Stable and Volatile Polity and Stable and Volatile Violence			
N = 38		Violence	
		Stable	Volatile
Polity	Stable	13	5
	Volatile	11	9

Source: Developed by author based upon data in the START and Polity databases.

Answer Primary Research Question

Finally, the primary question is: “Does a mature democracy predict stability in violence in African countries?” There is an indication that mature democracies do exhibit stability in violence as 80 percent (4 of 5) of the mature democracies do exhibit stable standard deviation in rates of violence (table 15). Additionally, 100 percent (5 of 5)

mature democracies exhibit low mean rates of violence (table 16). Among mature autocratic governments, only 75 percent (3 of 4) mature autocratic governments exhibited stable mean rates of violence (table 15). Additionally, 50 percent or (2 of 4) mature autocratic governments exhibited low mean rates of violence (table 16). Does a mature democracy predict stability in violence in African countries? The answer is yes, mature democracies do tend to have both a stable standard deviation in rates of violence and low mean rates of violence.

Table 15. Application of Evaluation Criteria: Mature Democratic and Autocratic Polity and Stable and Volatile Violence			
N = 9		Violence	
		Stable	Volatile
Polity	Mature Democratic	4	1
	Mature Autocratic	3	1

Source: Developed by author based upon data in the START and Polity databases.

Table 16. Application of Evaluation Criteria: Mature Democratic and Autocratic Polity and Low and High Violence			
N = 9		Violence	
		Low	High
Polity	Mature Democratic	5	0
	Mature Autocratic	2	2

Source: Developed by author based upon data in the START and Polity databases.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on this analysis, we could conclude that these results are generally inconclusive with regard to the nature of the relationship between polity and violence in Africa. The primary question is the only question we can answer with a high level of confidence. Generally, we can say that mature democracies do seem to exhibit lower mean rates of violence and do seem to be more stable with regard to the standard deviation of the rates of violence. This finding is consistent with democratic peace theory which espouses that mature democracies are more stable. It is difficult to draw any other conclusive decisions with regard to these findings.

Summary

The purpose of this research was to identify if polity is a relevant variable in determining the likelihood of stability in African countries. This chapter began with the results of the literature review, the operational approach, application of evaluation criteria, answers to primary and secondary research questions, and finally a discussion of conclusions and recommendations.

The author has reviewed the findings and has come to the conclusion that much of what we know from the literature does not seem to hold true for the countries in this study. The expected pattern based on the model derived from the literature review, did not manifest itself in the findings. Lastly, chapter 5 offers a brief summary and interpretation of findings, recommendations, and summary and conclusions.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The purpose of this research was to identify if polity is a relevant variable in determining the likelihood of stability in African countries. This chapter will offer a brief summary of findings, interpretation of findings, recommendations, and summary and conclusions. The answer generally appears to be no, polity is not a relevant variable in determining the likelihood of stability in Africa.

Summary of Findings

After reviewing the findings in Chapter 4 Analysis, the author concludes that much of what was derived from the literature about the relationship of polity and democracy does not seem to hold true for the countries in this study. That said, the following provides additional interpretation of the findings.

Interpretation of Findings

What do the results mean?

The results mean that we can state with some level of confidence that mature democracies have lower rates of violence and that they exhibit more stability with regard to rates of violence and polity. One may derive from these findings that countries with a weak polity score are more susceptible to volatility in both levels of polity and violence. Two thirds of all countries in the study exhibit a positive trending polity. While this is potentially good with regard to the ideal of promoting democracy, it may not always be beneficial. It is important for policy makers to understand that if there are autocratic

countries experiencing a positive trending polity, there is a possibility that these countries may go through a period of transition through the zero polity zone; which is essentially a very ineffective governing system. These countries should be monitored closely to ensure they do not remain in the ineffective stage for prolonged periods of time. Efforts may be established to assist these countries were possible to ensure they can make the transition as smoothly as possible.

What are the implications?

The implications are that all countries that do not have a mature governing system are more susceptible to volatility in both polity and rates of violence. Over two thirds of the African countries in this study possessed weak governments and many of these have experienced volatility in rates of violence and polity scores. These countries are the countries most likely to experience violence and potentially higher rates of violence. These are the countries the U.S. may be more likely to become involved with in bilateral or multilateral national building, humanitarian assistance or possibly peacekeeping operations in the future.

The model is not predictive and does not help analysts and policymakers determine which countries are most likely to experience violent outbreaks. It remains the policy maker's responsibility to review and analyze possible factors that may impact the likelihood of an outbreak of violence. It will ultimately be the informed analyst who will provide early warning of potential violent eruptions based on a multitude of factors not simply polity or the political environment of the country or region.

While polity is a contributing factor to help form an opinion about the possibility of violence in a country or region, the data do not present a strong enough correlation to

make a definitive statement about the contribution that polity plays with regard to the cause(s) of violence. There are very likely several other factors i.e., religion, ethnicity, economic variables, etc. that combine to influence the nature of the environment for any given country or region that contribute to the potentiality of violence.

Were there any unexpected findings?

The unexpected findings were that most of the results did not support any of the expected findings derived from the literature review. There was no definitive evidence to suggest that volatile polity leads to higher rates of violence. There was no evidence to suggest that weak forms of government yield higher rates of violence. There was no evidence to imply that weak volatile forms of government exhibit higher rates of violence. There is also no conclusive evidence to recommend that countries with positive trending polity scores experience higher rates of violence. It is important to note that many of the countries in the study exhibit low rates of violence, as well as positively trending rates of polity scores; both of which were unexpected – especially finding them together. An argument can be made that both of these findings are good.

Recommendations

One clear finding from this study is that democratization is a volatile transition period for most states. It is important that interested countries and international governing bodies assist in the progress of transitioning states to help ensure a relatively peaceful transition. At the very least, careful, deliberate and thoughtful assistance through the negotiation of the transition process can allow the transitioning country to experience least disturbed transition process.

For Decision Makers

Policymakers should have a sense of optimism in that many of the countries included in this study are moving in the direction of democratization. Many of these countries are relatively peaceful with regard to rates of violence. It is promising that many of these countries seek to become democratic in nature. There still remain areas to be studied and areas where decision makers, policymakers, senior leaders and diplomats can benefit from detailed analysis. It is important to consider that there were very few instances where countries remained stagnant from 1994 to 2014. Most of the countries experienced changes in both polity levels and rates of violence. It is difficult to provide specific areas to focus on, but if decision makers wish to focus on those countries in most need of assistance, they should focus on the following countries:

Table 17. Troubled countries	
Country	Highest Violence (fatalities per 100K)
Angola	91.63
South Sudan (Sudan)	98.94
Chad	116.90
Somalia	133.10
Central African Republic	158.58
Rwanda	169.86
Algeria	207.62
Libya	208.99

Source: Developed by author based upon data in the START and Polity databases.

While Mansfield and Snyder write about the phenomenon of democratization and war, their recommendations for managing the danger associated with the democratization process are likely as applicable to assisting with resolving internal political violence. One recommendation for policymakers is to help transitioning states make a smooth transition as they pass through the democratization process (Mansfield and Snyder 1995). Other factors to consider are the “power of the democratizing state, strength of potential deterrent coalition of states constraining it, the attractiveness of more peaceful options available to the democratizing state, and the nature of the groups making up its ruling coalition” (Mansfield and Snyder 1995). Policymakers should seek to recognize and promote these factors that lead to a peaceful transition process.

Mansfield and Snyder further elaborate what the promotion of some of these factors may look like. First, policymakers must offer the existing ruling coalition a “golden parachute” to make the transition to a democratic form of government a peaceful one (Mansfield and Snyder 1995). Offer them some guarantee that they will not be severely penalized if they go along with the peaceful transition to a democratic form of government.

Second, offer the ruling coalition a means of having a stake in the newly formed free-market economic structures of the newly developing democratic system (Mansfield and Snyder 1995). If the ruling coalition has a stake in the development of the new system, they will be more likely to promote the new system. Third, states going through democratization process must have a “free, competitive, and responsible marketplace of ideas in the newly democratizing states” (Mansfield and Snyder 1995). Essentially a free-

press is necessary to ensure that former ruling coalition cannot manipulate and monopolize the flow of information to their benefit.

Fourth, it is good for the international community to provide incentives through investment, trade, and security treaties that offer them some level of relative security as they develop their economy (Mansfield and Snyder 1995). Friedman argues that this is the “golden straightjacket” effect which is essentially the democratizing government develops economically and participates in international financial markets (Friedman 2004, 101-111).

For Further Study

Recommendations for further study are many; there is much that was unable to be considered in this thesis; mostly due to its limited scope. It would be beneficial to do a more robust study to include many of the other variables such as economic and ethnic factors, which were not included in this study in an effort to create a more predictive model. Opportunities abound to perform case studies on specific countries in this study to determine potential causes of unique behaviors exhibited in this study.

Unanswered questions

Questions for future researchers may include: if democracy has no effect on stability, then should democracy rate so highly in our national strategic policy? Additionally, if democracy has no effect on stability, and we continue to insist on spreading democracy, what are the effects of this approach? Consider possibly conducting case studies of specific countries to identify the root causes or contributing factors that make-up the preponderance of what causes instability in countries. Consider

using a different database for violence. Use the “correlated of war” database to measure war as opposed to internal political violence measured by the GTD database. Consider using some of the detailed sub-component variables of polity in the Polity IV database in order to gain greater fidelity on the nature of the relationship between polity and violence. There may exist trends that remain undiscovered by this researcher because I did not use the more detailed measures of polity. Additionally, researchers use the United States Agency for International Development Office of Conflict Management and Mitigation Interagency Conflict Assessment Framework to conduct analysis of one of the countries identified in table 16. Trouble Countries to further analyze the important factors that contribute to the outbreak of violence.

Things that could have been approached/done differently

Consider anchoring the research in U.S. Army, Department of Defense (DoD) and National Strategic policy documentation early in the thesis planning and development process to ensure the thesis addresses specific U.S. Army or DoD needs or questions. For example, start with an analysis of the National Security Strategy (NSS), followed by a detailed analysis of DoD’s National Defense Strategy (NDS), and Commander, U.S. African Command’s (AFRICOM) Posture Statement to help ground the study in strategic policy of the key stakeholders in the area of responsibility for Africa.

Summary and Conclusion

The purpose of this research was to identify if polity is a relevant variable in determining the likelihood of stability in African countries. This chapter offered a brief summary of findings, interpretation of findings, and recommendations. The answer

appears to be that polity is not a relevant causal factor in determining the likelihood of stability in Africa.

APPENDIX A

Polity vs. Violence by Category

			Violence per 100,000 pop			
			Low	Low	High	High
			Stable	Volatile	Stable	Volatile
Polity	Mature autocracy	Stable	Eritrea, Morocco		Sudan-North (Sudan)	
	Mature autocracy	Volatile				Libya
	Weak autocracy	Stable	Egypt, Cameroon, Togo, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Guinea		Uganda	Rwanda, Chad, Angola
	Weak autocracy	Volatile	Mauritania Zimbabwe Republic of Congo (Congo Brazzaville)(People's Republic of Congo) Tunisia			South Sudan (Sudan), Algeria
	Weak democracy	Stable	Mozambique			Somalia
	Weak democracy	Volatile	Guinea-Bissau Niger, Senegal, Democratic Republic of Congo (Congo Kinshasa)(Zaire), Djibouti	Liberia, Nigeria		Central African Republic, Burundi, Sierra Leone, Kenya
	Mature democracy	Stable	Mali, South Africa	Namibia		
	Mature democracy	Volatile	Ghana, Madagascar			

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